

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
July 14, 2005

Present: Gogarten (chair), Roberts, Smith, Hultgren (staff), Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Gogarten at 7:35 p.m.

The minutes of March 24, 2005 were reviewed and no corrections made.

Walton reported that the non-profit ReCONNstruction Center is moving from a warehouse space to a store in New Britain and will be open with regular hours sometime in August. Much of the inventory includes overstock items from stores.

Walton stated that the electronics, green building and expanded bottle bills did not make it into law this legislative session.

On June 29 Walton attended the Connecticut DEP work session on the State solid waste management plan. A consulting firm has been hired to draft the plan and this session was intended to gather input from interested parties. The DEP's goal is to have a draft prepared in the fall.

Walton stated that she toured the facility of WeRecycle, the Town's new electronics recycler. Their emphasis is on electronics refurbishment, before recycling. A poster was created for the transfer station that informs residents of where each component gets recycled. It was suggested that this poster hang in the Town Hall bulletin board.

The committee reviewed the transfer station user reports with data from August 2004 to June 2005. The findings were very similar to the data that was reviewed at the March 2005 meeting. Report A (frequency of use)- about 1,300 households use the transfer station exclusively, with another 800 users that have collection service. The vast majority frequent the transfer station once a month or less. About 37% of the users have single-family trash collection service. Report B (materials delivered) - most deliveries of trash are accompanied with a delivery of recyclables. After trash and recyclables, bulky waste is the most frequently delivered item. Report C (quantity of refuse) – 59% bring in 2 to 4 bags of trash with each visit, followed by 36% who bring one bag of trash per visit. Report D (quantity of bulky waste) – 93% of the users do not exceed 1 cubic yard of bulky waste per visit. This will have to be verified with transfer station staff. Half of these residents have trash collection service. Report E (frequency of use with quantity of refuse) – there are a few hundred households that bring in one bag of trash once per month or less. The majority bring in 2 to 4 bags monthly or less. Report F (frequency of use with quantity of bulky waste) – very small quantities are being brought in sporadically. Report G (visits by time of day) – the hours least used are last Tuesday afternoons and noon to one on Thursdays. Hultgren suggested that, as discussed at a previous meeting, making a sign to post at the transfer station listing prices by item. The

study will be winding up in the next month and staff write a report. With this new information, the committee will help re-evaluate the prepaid bag proposal.

Walton reported that the litter ordinance, which went into effect in May, has already been effectively used on a blighted property. She may also have to use it with another blighted property and an absentee landlord property with refuse littering the property.

Twelve more open-framed cans and bottles recycling containers were placed in Mansfield parks this spring and are being well used. Public works staff will be constructing another twelve this fiscal year. It was suggested that this success should be published in a solid waste/recycling journal.

This spring only twelve coupons were handed out at the transfer station on Rid Litter Day. Based on this low turnout continuing Rid Litter Day was discussed. It was decided to continue with Rid Litter Day but without the coupons. Gogarten recommended that while there needs to be better litter education and enforcement, free roadside litter disposal should be publicized in with the billing messages and on the website.

The non-profit organization, Hands Across the Water, Inc. placed a shipping container at the transfer station in the end of May and books are flowing in. The Friends of the Library have been informed for their next sale. Packing leftover books from the sale may be a good service for Southeast School's Green Thumbs Club.

Walton reported that the Festival on the Green is scheduled for Sunday, September 25 from 12-4, rain or shine. She is looking for volunteers who will be in charge of either recycling/waste set-up or working with the volunteers on the day of the event. This year the low-waste concept is being integrated into initial communication with vendors and publicity. Walton purchased easy fold-up trash containers for the event and may be making recycling banners to place throughout the Festival. She will also award certificates for food vendors on the day of the event that come prepared to produce little waste.

The use of 45 gallon cans in the trash collection service levels was again reviewed. It was decided that service levels should adhere to the 35 gallon limit as 45 gallon cans can be too heavy for the hauler to lift.

Hultgren discussed raising the refuse rates as costs are rising and the solid waste fund is still losing \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. The proposed rate increases represent about a 5% rise. It was suggested that residents be given ample notice – beginning with a notice in the next billing (October) to go into effect January 1, 2006. Gogarten suggested that the transfer station fees could increase sooner than that if needed.

Hultgren stated that the single-family collection contract must be extended. Walton suggested that the contract be modified to exclude the hauler from putting recyclables in the trash truck hopper in order to move them to a central location. Although this practice

is noted in the billing inserts, residents call occasionally concerned about them throwing out their recycling.

Walton reported that a UConn marketing student conducted and analyzed a EO Smith recycling survey this spring. An EO Smith senior will be using the survey findings to implement a recycling campaign this coming school year. Walton is working with Julie Sherman, EO Smith science teacher, and student Holly Connelly. They will be touring the trash incinerator and the recycling plant this summer. Holly will be producing a video in her video productions class to show the actual process. She will also be making a presentation to the incoming freshman and creating promotional posters.

Walton discussed recycling sneakers year round which would involve storing them for the year. It was decided due to lack of storage, to continue it as a short term spring collection only.

Walton stated that the developer for the Storrs downtown is in the process of creating sustainability guidelines. Walton made input into the preliminary draft. Another draft will be presented at the July 19 planning and design committee meeting. Gogarten expressed an interest in attending.

Hultgren stated that the transfer station permit renewal is contingent on placing a concrete pad under the refrigerators, covering tires and placing three sides on the oil recycling shelter.

Smith shared that Cambridge Mass recycles many more plastic items. The committee asked Walton to check with Willimantic Waste Paper about how much more would it cost to recycle more types of plastics.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 8. The committee agreed to resume a regular schedule of the 2nd Thursdays of the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton
Recycling/Refuse Coordinator

Cc: Lon R. Hultgren, Director of Public Works, Members, file, Town Manager, Town Clerk